

water is to come from. An extensive reservoir is provided for rain-water, with a small steam-engine and a capstan to force it up throughout the building, but for spring-water, the workmen are boring an artesian well, and have not yet got the desired supply, at a depth of 150 feet. The medical superintendent is desirous of having a chapel erected at some little distance, to sustain the idea of "going to church," in which case the house chapel, with its organ, will be devoted to recreative purposes.

**Glasgow.**—In a dispute as to the Portland-street suspension bridge, Messrs. Grainger and Leslie, the contractors, as arbiters in the dispute, have issued interim findings, from which it would appear that the whole expenses already incurred in taking down the towers and in rebuilding them are to be paid by the parties in proportion, the trustees for the suspension bridge paying two-fifths, and the contractor paying three-fifths parts of these expenses, and neither party being found entitled to expenses in the submission. The arbiters find it established, that throughout the whole erection of the towers, so far as these have been taken down and reported on, the contractors have failed to execute the work in terms of the specification; that very defective and inferior description of workmanship and materials were employed in the erection of the towers; and that this is sufficient to account for the failure of the works. They further find that the contractors proceeded in the erection of the towers in contravention of the terms of the specification, under the superintendence, and with the knowledge, and partly with the sanction of the inspector appointed by the trustees. They are of opinion that, had the towers been erected, and the whole works constructed in terms of the specification, they would have been sufficiently strong for the purposes intended.

**Crewkerne, Somerset.**—On Tuesday, the 31st ult. the foundation-stone of a new church was laid in this town by Mr. Thomas Hoskins, with the usual ceremonies. The church will accommodate 400 persons, and will be built of the stone quarried on the spot in hammer-dressed masonry, with Ham stone dressings. It will consist of a nave, north aisle, and porch-chancel; organ-chapel on south and vestry on north side of the same. The foundations for a tower are laid under the vestry, and a bell-gable will be erected at west end of the nave. The church is to be of the Perpendicular style of Gothic architecture, and will be erected from the designs of Mr. Mountford Allen, architect, of Crewkerne, by Messrs. Chick and Son, of Bredminster.

#### WIDE AND NARROW FENESTRATION.

At present I have not seen the publication which forms the subject of the leader in *THE BUILDER* before last; but after what is there said concerning it, I shall make a point of perusing it attentively,—that portion of it at least which treats of design and its proprieties. Many others will, no doubt, do the same, although its name would not have induced them to inquire after the book.

Together with many sound opinions, Mr. Garbett entertains some extreme ones. His rationalism causes him to be too much of a rigorist, and to lay down laws for others which he himself could hardly adhere to in practice. From one of the extracts given in your columns, it appears that he is exceedingly severe upon our general system of fenestration; and that too, for a reason precisely the reverse of what might be expected. Instead of censuring it for its crowdedness—for the too great frequency of windows in proportion to the width of frontage, which is such as to make the voids equal to, and often more than, the solids, as measured on the horizontal line or plan of front, he condemns it for "fewness of openings;" and taunts us with being content with "about half or one-third the windows thought necessary in the same latitudes elsewhere." Now, it is far easier to utter such criticism with the pen than to prove its correctness with the pencil.

It is of no use talking against facts and figures: either Garbett is right, or Barry is

decidedly wrong; for in the "Travellers," the "Reform Club," and "Bridgewater-house," Sir Charles has adopted almost a minimum of aperture,—certainly what, according to the other, must be a very insufficient proportion of it to be suitable for our Anglo-hyperborean climate and latitude, which are so spoken of by some people as to render it wonderful that we should think of having any gardens but winter gardens, and that parasols should not be entirely discarded for parapluies. Really! what would-be philosophy, yet actual nonsense, is prated about climate! We ought to shiver here in England in the dog-days; to discard verandas and sun-blinds, and either augment or multiply our windows till they would afford us at least twice the quantity of light with which we are now satisfied.

According to the author quoted and to theory, the apartments in the three buildings above mentioned, and, of course, hundreds of others also, ought to exhibit scarcely less than Cimmerian gloom, instead of which they are amply lighted. It is a common mistake to suppose that abundance of light will of itself alone insure cheerfulness to a room, it being possible to have plenty of the former with very little, if any, of the other. That it is very possible, too, to have an inconvenient excess of the former, is tolerably evident; else, wherefore are so many contrivances resorted to for the purpose of moderating it? Yes, it will be said; but they are made use of only in sun-shiny weather; at other times—Well, and at other times, too, there are disadvantages attending excess of window-aperture, no matter whether owing to the windows being unusually large, or to there being, as Mr. Garbett recommends, an unusual number of small ones. In the latter case the window side of a room would be quite cut up by a multiplicity of insignificantly small, although separate, openings, the piers or rather divisions between which would be so narrow as to leave no space for any furniture against them. Excess of void, as compared with solid, is ill suited to such an ungenial climate as ours has got the disreputable character of being, since it presents too great a surface of mere glass exposed to the influences of the unpropitious elements out of doors. Excess of window-opening in a room is quite at variance with that particular species of the "comfortable" which we English call *snuggles*—a term for which no other European language affords a perfect equivalent. On the contrary, there is, at least according to my own feelings, and it may be very queer idiosyncrasy, something peculiarly uncomfortable and cheerless in what this author would perhaps call a well-windowed room on an inclement wintry day. Let us be content with crystal palaces, and rein in our ambitious aspirations for crystal-fronted dwelling-houses.

Until now, multiplicity of windows—i. e. in proportion to the extent of line or quantum of general surface over which they are, or have to be, distributed,—has been accounted a most formidable, nay, insuperable difficulty in architectural composition. While it is destructive of breadth and repose—those two important qualities to which a very clever writer in *THE BUILDER* lately called attention,—it is productive of littleness of manner and general physiognomy.

All this, however, is mere talking, and what Mr. Garbett has said is no more. Let the matter then be decided by putting it to the test of precise explanation, if not of actual ocular demonstration. Mr. Garbett contends that we ought to have narrower windows, and more of them than at present; which is, of course easy enough for any man at his writing-desk to assert, but not quite so easy for him to prove by sitting down to his drawing-board, and there giving us a satisfactory solution of what appears to be at present a most difficult problem. If Mr. G. can call out *eureka*, let him convince us that he is justified in doing so, by exhibiting to us a pair of "contrasts," viz. a London house of average frontage with the usual number of windows—i. e. three on a floor, and another design having its apertures augmented as to their number but diminished as to width. What sort of figure would the

last cut? Would not such system of fenestration inevitably occasion a most disagreeable appearance of fritter and littleness, if not of weakness also? As far as appearance is concerned, there would be no improvement upon present practice; and still less would there be any with regard to internal convenience or effect. Admitted through a number of narrow apertures, light would be rather scattered about than diffused. Should I herein be mistaken, our author will, no doubt, hasten to set me to rights, and will, perhaps, even thank me for having afforded him the opportunity of coming forward again and explaining himself more fully. Q. E. D.

#### COMPETITION AMONGST BUILDERS.

If the letter of B. H. on this subject, is not answered by an abler pen than mine, I would venture to offer a few remarks on some obvious fallacies, which it appears to me to contain. In doing so, however, I do not wish to become the advocate of indiscriminate competition in any profession or trade. The architect seems to hold a position just midway between the *aesthetic* and the *practical*, the *artist* and the *manufacturer*, and he is called upon to exercise the functions, and ought therefore to possess the qualifications, of both. It is on account of this twofold nature of his work, that there must always be a difficulty in fairly determining his remuneration, which at present is generally a certain per centage upon the outlay incurred in the work he has designed and superintended: that outlay being ascertained, it must be evident that, if 5 per cent. is a fair remuneration, the architect who undertakes to do the work for less must either make a sacrifice, perform his task inefficiently, or his abilities must be of an inferior order, and therefore not deserving of the ordinary remuneration. It may perhaps be argued from this that the architect's fees ought to vary in proportion to the different abilities of individuals: this indeed is to a certain extent the case, but it may be considered generally that the adjustment is made by the circumstance that a man of superior powers and attainments is by them enabled to get through more work in the same time, and, from the reputation he attains, gets more to do, than his less gifted professional brethren.

With the builder the case is very different: every architect knows that there is no such thing as a fixed scale of prices of materials or labour, upon which a fair profit to the builder can be estimated: if there were, that portion of the architect's labour would be far easier and more agreeable. But building materials are bought in the market at constantly-varying prices: thus a builder may be able to undertake a work requiring a large quantity of a particular kind of material at a considerably lower rate than another, because he may have happened to have purchased, or knows where he can procure, that material below its average price.

There is another marked difference between competition amongst architects and amongst builders: in the former case those who sit in judgment on the merit of the designs are unfortunately in most cases non-professional men, too often sadly incompetent to fulfil their task, and who may readily be caught with a pretty drawing of a visionary building, and an offer to do it cheap. Whereas, when builders send tenders for a work, where an architect is employed, they know that a certain standard of excellence (as described in the specification) will be required, and the architect has always the discretionary power of rejecting anything inferior. The architect is also enabled, by comparison with his own estimate, to form an opinion of the amount of the tenders; and no respectable member of the profession would recommend the adoption of a tender which he considered very much below the proper amount. I do not think, therefore, that the case is quite fairly stated by "B. H." in putting the "time, talent, and education" of the architect in opposition to the "attention, capital, and experience" of the builder.

In conclusion, let me advert to the practical